

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1296

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PO

SUBJ: LABOR ROUND-UP

SUMMARY: ISOLATED EVENTS REVEAL INCREASED NON-COMMUNIST LABOR
ACTIVITY. END SUMMARY.

1. INTERNATIONAL LABOR: JACK JONES, PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH
TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION, ARRIVED IN PORTUGAL MARCH 10 FOR A
ONE-DAY VISIT AT THE INVITATION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY. THE
SOCIALISTS ALSO GAVE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE TO AN INTERVIEW BY
ICFTU SECRETARY GENERAL OTTO KERSTEN IN BRUSSELS.

2. UNION PROBLEMS: ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES OF THE METALWORKERS'
FEDERATION OCCUPIED THE OFFICES OF THE FEDERATION TO PROTEST THE
FIRING OF ONE OF THEIR NUMBER AND THE HIRING OF A NEW SECRETARY
GENERAL AT AN "EXCESSIVE" SALARY. THE FEDERATION'S OFFICERS,
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WHO ARE PCP SUPPORTERS, CLAIM THE SOLIDARITY OF 115 UNIONS AND

CITE EXISTING (PRE-APRIL 25) REGULATIONS AUTHORIZING THE DISPUTED SALARY LEVEL.

3. TOURIST INDUSTRY: WORKERS SUPPORTED BY THE POPULAR SOCIALIST FRONT (FSP) OCCUPIED THE HOTEL DO MUXITO IN SETUBAL TO CONVERT IT INTO A WORKERS' VACATION RETREAT. THIS IS THE LATEST OF SEVERAL TAKE-OVERS OF TOURIST FACILITIES OCCURING DURING PAST MONTHS. IN SOME CASES MANAGEMENT HAS PASSIVELY ACQUIESCED IN THE OCCUPATIONS DUE TO POOR TOURIST PROSPECTS AND LABOR AGITATION. ONE PROBLEM FREQUENTLY CITED BY MANAGEMENT IS THAT GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS AND WORKER RESISTANCE MAKE PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE, THUS MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO REDUCE OPERATING COSTS. THE HOTEL WORKERS' UNION MAINTAINS THAT PORTUGAL SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON INCREASING INTERNAL, WORKERS' TOURISM RATHER THAN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE.

4. SOCIALIST BANK WORKERS MEET: A MEETING OF 350 SOCIALIST BANK WORKERS WAS HELD MARCH 8-9. MINISTER OF JUSTICE SALGADO ZENHA DEFENDED THE NEED FOR UNIONS TO BE FREE OF GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL. THE BANK WORKERS PASSED RESOLUTIONS EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CLANDESTINE SPANISH BANK WORKERS' FEDERATION (U.G.T.); IN FAVOR OF BANK NATIONALIZATION UNDER LIMITED CONDITIONS; AND PROTESTING THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE WORKWEEK TO 40 (REPEAT 40) HOURS BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDARD NATIONAL WORKWEEK BY GOVERNMENTAL DECREE.

4. COMMENT: THE BANK WORKERS' MEETING WAS THE SOCIALISTS MOST NOTABLE LABOR EFFORT IN RECENT WEEKS. AN UNPUBLICIZED REASON FOR THE MEETING WAS TO ORGANIZE AN ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LISBON BANK WORKERS' UNION FROM THE COMMUNISTS, AND THUS REPEAT THEIR SUCCESSFUL CAPTURE (WITH FAR-LEFT SUPPORT) OF THE OPORTO BANK WORKERS UNION.
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